Highway connecting Jalandhar to Amritsar

†*352. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
DR. MURLIMANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the highway connecting Jalandhar to Amritsar is a narrow one and it is planned to be widened;

(b) if so, the details of the scheme;

(c) whether it is also a fact that in view of the indications of increasing trade with Pakistan, there is a need to pay special attention on this stretch of National Highway; and

(d) if so, the reaction of Government in this regard and by when this stretch of the road is targeted to be widened?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Jalandhar-Amritsar section of National Highway No. 1 is a two laned road and its length is 69 km. Letter of acceptance has been issued for the work of four laning of 49 Km. stretch of this road on Built Operate and Transfer (BOT) basis. The balance 20 km is also planned for four laning on BOT basis.

(c) The existing and projected traffic on this road justifies its widening to four lanes between Jalandhar and Amritsar. It will also cater to trade requirements, if any.

(d) Four laning is targeted to be completed by December, 2008.

Release of Indian and Pakistani fishermen

†*353. SHRI JAYANTILAL BAROT:
SHRI LEKHRAJ BACHANI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Pakistani fishermen released by Government of India from January, 2004 to April, 2005;

(b) The number of Indian fishermen released by Government of Pakistan during the said period;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) whether India has returned the boats of Pakistani fishermen to them, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the number of Indian fishermen whose boats have been returned to them by Pakistan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) India released 157 Pakistani fishermen from January, 2004 to April, 2005.

(b) Pakistan released 800 Indian fishermen during the said period.

(c) India did not release any Pakistani fishing boat during January, 2004 to April, 2005

(d) Pakistan did not release any Indian fishing boat during the said period.

Agricultural workers

*354. SHRI BALAVANT *Alias* BAL APTE:
SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR:

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether agricultural sector employs more persons than any other sector, both as farmers and agricultural workers;

(b) if so, the total number of agricultural workers in the country, State-wise; and

(c) the details of various Central welfare schemes for agricultural workers?

THE MINISTER OF LABOURAND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRA SEKHAR RAO):(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A Statement is enclosed (See below)

(c) The Government has launched several welfare and poverty alleviation/ employment generation schemes for the rural poor which, *inter-alia,* include agricultural workers. Some such schemes are: Swarnjayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana, Sampoorna Gramin Rojgar Yojana, Pradhanmantri Gram Sadak Yojana, National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), etc. The Government is implementing Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) with the objective to provide assistance to the Below Poverty Line (BPL) rural households.